



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/821,802	03/30/2001	Volker Kettler	TPP 31370	5014

7590 12/11/2002

STEVENS, DAVIS, MILLER & MOSHER, L.L.P.
Suite 850
1615 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

EXAMINER

TRAN A, PHI DIEU N

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3637

DATE MAILED: 12/11/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/821,802

Applicant(s)

KETTLER ET AL.

Examiner

Phi D A

Art Unit

3637

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 September 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-6 and 10-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-6 and 10-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 23 September 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 10.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 14 recites the limitation "said top end" in lines 2-3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.
3. Claim 5 line 3 recites the limitation "tongue and an end of the groove". Should it be "said tongue and an end of the groove"?
4. Claims 2-6, 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are confusing in scope. The preamble states "a parquet board"; however, the claim body appears to positively claim multiple boards. The claims are examined as claiming multiple boards for examination purpose.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

6. Claims 2-6, 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The new limitation at the end of the claim 13 "whereby

Art Unit: 3637

when.....locking lip into the groove” does not have support in the specification. Specification only discloses the gradation enlarging the width and having a tapered surface (page 3 fifth paragraph).

Drawings

7. The proposed drawing correction and/or the proposed substitute sheets of drawings, filed on 9/23/02 have been approved. A proper drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The correction to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 2-3, 5-6, 10-11, 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moriau et al (6006486).

Moriau et al (figures 5-7) shows a parquet board with a groove and tongue edge profile having a projecting tongue (31) on at least one edge of each parquet board and a receding groove (32) on at least one other edge of the parquet board, the top edge of the tongue having a projecting locking lip (33, the face 7 being the top surface) running in the longitudinal direction of the tongue, a corresponding locking recess (39) being providing running the longitudinal direction of the groove, the edge of the board defining the groove having a top groove cheek (34)

Art Unit: 3637

a bottom groove cheek (42), the recess being formed in the lower portion of the top groove cheek, the top and bottom groove cheeks defining an entry for the groove, the bottom groove cheek being shorter than the top groove cheek, a gradation (WP, appendix B) being provided on the bottom groove cheek widens only a portion of the groove and a tapered surface (TP, appendix B) being provided between the widened portion of the groove and the remainder of the groove, the tongue being provided in its root portion with a section of greater thickness than the remainder of the tongue forming a thicker tongue portion (RP, appendix B), the thickness in the remaining portion of the tongue being connected to the thicker tongue portion via a tapered surface (TP2, appendix B, 40, 38), the thicker portion of the tongue being not yet engaged in the graduated portion when the lip enters the groove during assembly of the board, the entry edge of the top groove cheek being provided with a tapered surface (41), the locking lip having an edge closest to a free end of the tongue and the edge being provided with a tapered or rounded surface (30, 40), the tongue being sized such that when in an assembled position with an adjacent board the tongue does not have the length which completely fills the groove and hence a gap between the tongue and an end of the groove (figure 7, 32), at least a small gap (figure 7, G) between an edge of the locking lip and the corresponding edge of the recess when the board is assembled with an adjacent board, at least a small gap between the tapered surfaces (TP, and TP2) on the groove and on the tongue, the board being an elongated rectangle.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3637

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 12, 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moriau et al (6006486) in view of Roy et al (6216409).

Moriau et al shows all the claimed limitations except for the end of the tongue on a bottom side having a tapered surface.

Roy et al shows a tapered surface (12, figure 2) on a bottom side of the end of the tongue to enable easy insertion of the tongue into the groove.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Moriau et al to show the end of the tongue on a bottom side having a tapered surface because it would enable easy insertion of the tongue into the groove as taught by Roy et al.

5. Claims 4, 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsai (5274979) in view of Moriau et al (6006486).

Tsai (figure 2) shows a parquet board having a tongue and groove edge profile, the top of the tongue having a projecting lip (19) running the in the longitudinal direction of the tongue, a corresponding locking recess (29) is provided in the groove, the groove having a top cheek and a bottom cheek, the recess being at the bottom of the top cheek, the bottom cheek (22) being shorter than the top groove cheek (24), the tongue having in its root portion a section of greater thickness than the remainder of the tongue (the part of the tongue having the lip), the thickness in the remaining portion of the tongue being connected to the thicker tongue portion via a tapered surface (the tapered surface provided by the lip 19), the top cheek of the board projects beyond

Art Unit: 3637

the groove so that when assembled with an adjacent parquet board, the boards come into contact with each other (figure 4), the front end of the projecting tongue being in contact with the top cheeks of an adjacent board to form a surface (figure 4).

Tsai does not show a gradation being provided on the bottom groove cheek, which widens only a portion of the groove and a tapered surface being provided between the widened portion of the groove and the remainder of the groove.

Moriau et al shows a gradation being provided on the bottom groove cheek, which widens only a portion of the groove and a tapered surface being provided between the widened portion of the groove and the remainder of the groove (figures 5-7, appendix B).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Tsai to show a gradation being provided on the bottom groove cheek which widens only a portion of the groove and a tapered surface being provided between the widened portion of the groove and the remainder of the groove because it would enable easy insertion of the tongue and groove together for easy assembly of two board members together.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 2-6,10-14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The prior art shows different floorboard designs.

Art Unit: 3637

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phi D A whose telephone number is 703-306-9136. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on 703-308-2486. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9326 for regular communications and 703-872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

Phi Dieu Tran A
December 7, 2002

PA

LANNA MAI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

